

## REPORT #4 - April 24, 1985

Research since the preparation of Report #3, March 29, 1985, has focused on land records, court records, tax assessment data, and various secondary sources. Primary source research has led to considerable clarification of occupancy and land use patterns in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries - the late Addison period - but some lack of clarity remains for the Berry period after 1810. Research into secondary studies on tenancy and agricultural products marketing systems has helped to establish the context for some of the economic and social changes at Oxon Hill Manor in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. I also collected some additional census data which will be analyzed at a later date.

My recent research has partially clarified both leasing arrangements and sales of parts of Oxon Hill Manor between the death of Thomas Addison in 1774 and the sale of the manor house (and 1328 acres of land) to Zachariah Berry in 1810. I will discuss the data on leasing and on sales under separate headings.

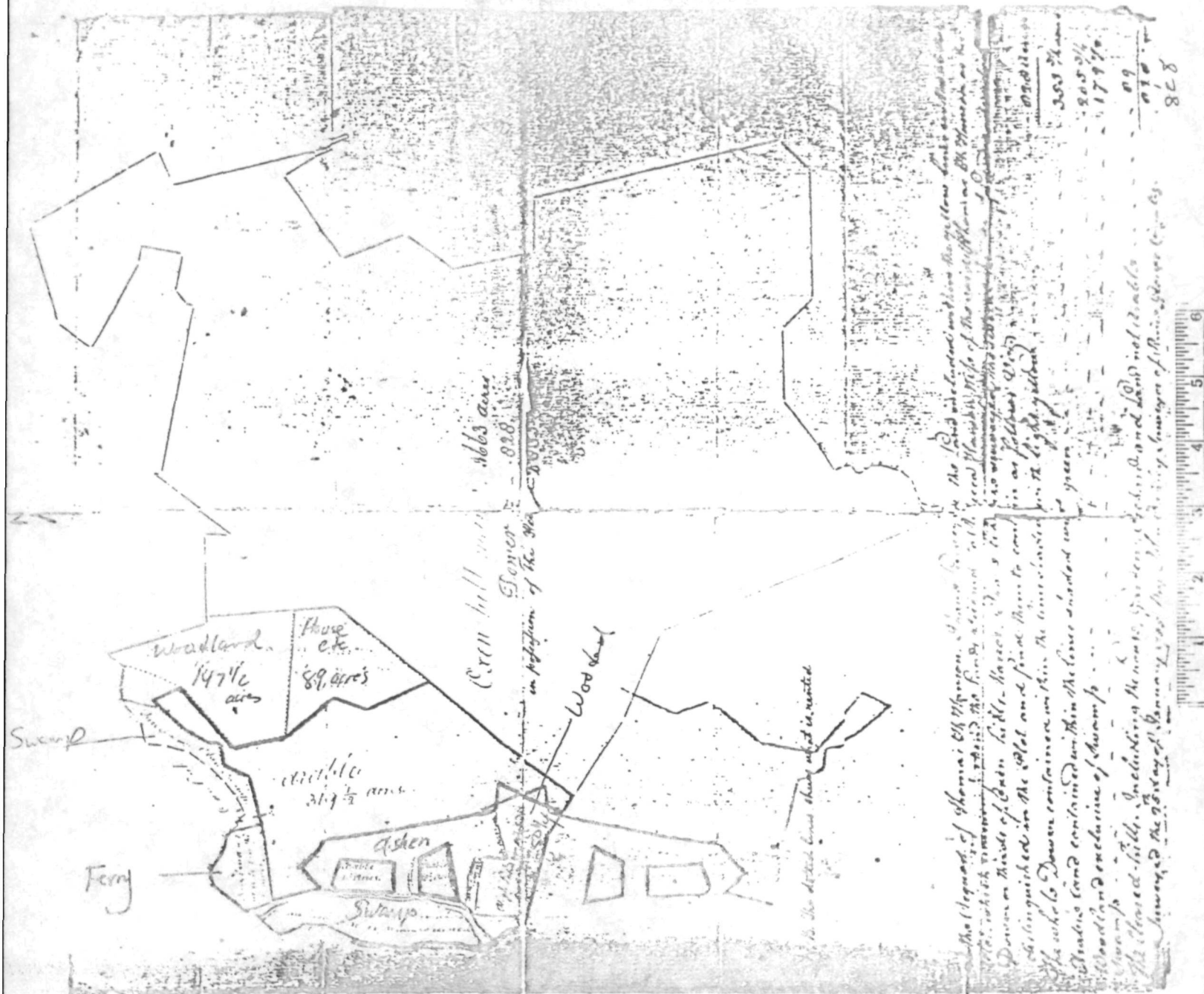
### Leasing Arrangements at Oxon Hill Manor

1775 In 1775, one year after Oxon Hill Manor had been bequeathed by Thomas Addison to his five-year old son, Walter Dulany Addison, the estate leased approximately 100 acres to John Clifford. The trustees of the estate, Thomas' brother John Addison and Overton Carr, leased 39 acres of land at the ferry site along Oxen Creek and opposite Alexandria (see Maps 1 and 2), along with approximately 61 additional acres, for a total of about 100 acres. The entire 100-acre lease area contained a ferry house, a fishing house, and a fishery, although the documentation does not indicate their exact location. The 1775 deed refers to the leasehold, costing £120 annually, as a "plantation." The lease provided for some cutting of wood on the rented land and it was to run for a term of 11 years. The presence of John Clifford











at the ferry site explains the subsequent references in other deeds to "Clifford's Ferry" on the Oxon Hill Manor property (Maryland Hall of Records (MHR), Annapolis Maryland, Land Records, CC2, p.215, Dec. 26, 1775; MHR, Chancery Papers 128, 1784-1785).

*fs* In 1776 Rebecca Addison, Thomas' widow, granted power of attorney to her brother-in-law, John Addison, and to Overton Carr. The deed refers to her as residing in Annapolis at the time. Since other documentation indicates that she wrote letters from "Oxon Hill" in the early 1780s, she may have moved from Annapolis to the manor after 1776 or she may have been occupying Oxon Hill seasonally. In her arrangement with Addison and Carr she empowered them to collect all rents, to sell her livestock and crops at the appropriate times, and to contract for the crops to be grown on her "several plantations" in Prince George's County (MHR, Land Records, CC2, p.268, Dec. 11, 1776). Also in 1776, John Addison leased "Hart Park," a 618-acre tract of Oxon Hill Manor, as his brother had requested in his 1774 will. John appears to have awaited the death of their mother, Susanna Addison, who had been living at Hart Park when Thomas died in 1774. John was to pay only £40 per year for the lease, which was to run for 16 years (to 1792) (MH\$, Land Records, CC2, p.302, Sept. 16, 1776).

*good source then* As Report #3 indicates, Rebecca Addison owned a total of 96 slaves in Prince George's County in 1776, 67 at the Oxon Hill Manor house and 29 at "Mrs. Addison's Quarter" (location unknown-next to her brother-in-law, Anthony Addison). She was one of the largest slaveholders in the Potomac River side of Prince George's County, the area included in the 1776 Census (the Patuxent River side of the county was not included).

Shortly after Rebecca Addison's remarriage - to Thomas Hawkins Hanson in 1778 - she and her new husband initiated legal proceedings against the estate. The suit noted that Rebecca had never been assigned her dower, a one-third share of all personal and real property owned by her late husband, to which she was legally entitled. The proceedings indicated that her children were living with and being cared for by



her and her husband, and that she was deriving some income from the Oxon Hill estate to cover these expenses. The court appointed John Addison to act as guardian for the children in this case, and in his testimony John declared that the estate was earning little or no profits. Rebecca and Thomas Hanson explained that the lack of profitability of the estate was, in fact, the main reason for their suit. John Addison raised no objection to the request for the formalized dower, and in 1783 Addison neighbors Henry Rozer and Leonard Marbury awarded Rebecca Hanson 828 acres of the estate, including the house (see Map 2).

The estate which Rebecca's son, Walter Dulany Addison, had inherited in 1774 included 3,663 acres (see Map 1). At some point before 1782 John Addison was given 100  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres, thereby reducing Oxon Hill Manor to 3562  $\frac{1}{4}$  acres. Walter had also received 54 acres of "Force," bringing his total estate to 3616  $\frac{1}{4}$  acres. The 828-acre dower was considered by Rozer and Marbury to be one-third of the value of Walter's 3616  $\frac{1}{4}$  acres (MHR, Chancery Records 13, p.516, May 20, 1782; MHR, Chancery Papers 128, 1784-1785). Rebecca also received one-third shares, by value, of the estates of two of her other sons - John and Thomas Addison - as well as £24 annually from the £120 per year lease to John Clifford. Since the 39-acre ferry site rented by Clifford was not included in the dower (see Map 2), Clifford's other 61 acres must have been in the dower area for the arbitrators to have granted Rebecca part of the annual rent.

In 1784-1785 the estate became embroiled in a more serious legal battle when Overton Carr, now Walter Dulany Addison's guardian, charged the Hansons and their tenants (Leonard Marbury and Nicholas Lowe) with "waste and destruction" of the wooded areas of Oxon Hill Manor. Map 2 (dotted lines) indicates that the Hansons were leasing most of the 828-acre dower by this time. The leases included: 35 acres of cleared land and 5 acres of the 147  $\frac{1}{2}$  wooded unit (NW area) to Nicholas Lowe; an unspecified "small" acreage to a Mr. (Edelen?); about 61 acres to John Clifford (part of the 100 acres he leased in 1775); and 58  $\frac{1}{4}$  acres of woodland plus approximately 530 acres, including the 89-acre



"cleared hills . . . house, garden, orchards and land not arable," to Leonard Marbury. The 58 1/4 acre figure written in the legal proceedings may be an incorrect figure which should have been 580 or 588 1/4 acres. This suggestion is based on the fact that the Hansons reserved only about 200 acres - the "ashen swamp" areas - of the 828-acre tract for their own use, leaving 628 acres leased. If the figure was 580 1/4 acres, the "small" part leased to Mr. (Edelen?) may have been about 8 acres. The leasing situation is made more complicated, however, by the fact that about 61 acres were rented to John Clifford (the 39-acre ferry site was not part of the dower).

To summarize, by 1785 the Hansons were leasing about 628 acres of the 828-acre dower to at least four persons: Leonard Marbury, Nicholas Lowe, Mr. (Edelen?), and John Clifford. Although the acreages are not certain, Leonard Marbury was renting the manor house and possibly a total of over 500 acres. If not, then substantial acreage was being rented to unnamed tenants. The leasing situation on Walter Dulany Addison's lands, the remaining 2734 1/4 acres (3562 1/4 minus the 828-acre dower), is not known for this period. A careful examination of land records for Prince George's County revealed no leasing information on Walter Dulany Addison for these years.

Marbury's principal use of the leased land was apparently to grow tobacco. He and Nicholas Lowe got into difficulty with Overton Carr because they were timbering their lands and selling the wood for income (Walter would inherit the land on the death of his mother). Marbury and Hanson defended this action as necessary to open up fresh ground for tobacco crops, owing to the fact that currently cleared land was "worn out" from previous tobacco crops. Marbury had cleared about 8 acres of a 58 1/4-acre wooded tract adjoining the swamp along the Potomac River, and Hanson argued that Marbury would have to continue to clear 11 or 12 acres annually. If not, he asserted, profits on the dower land would be "exceedingly reduced." Lowe's lease allowed him to timber one-third of the 5 wooded acres he was renting in each of the first 3 years of his 5-year lease. He had cleared only 1/2 acre by early 1785.



Marbury and Hanson also justified clearing the land by pointing to the need for lumber on the estate. They indicated that a number of houses and buildings needed repair, including two tobacco houses, and that the estate needed a new tobacco house and a good deal of fencing. They also wanted wood for making hogsheads to transport the cured tobacco. Marbury's "overseer and manager," Lancelot Wade, testified that 23 walnuts and wild cherries had been cut recently on the estate, along with some firewood near the manor house. He also indicated that Marbury was employing 17 slaves on his leasehold, 5 of whom were rented, and that Marbury had planted corn and enough acreage to produce 140 bushels of wheat. Although agreeing with Marbury and Hanson that new land was needed for tobacco, he contradicted himself by asserting that the land already cleared would be adequate if it were properly manured.

Marbury's lease did not include the "ashen swamp" along the Potomac River. This area, and apparently the "ashen swamp" along Oxen Creek (see Map 2), was the approximately 200 acres reserved by Hanson for uses not specified in the documents. At least 5 acres of the land along the Potomac was meadow land, and Hanson was planning to fence the entire swamp area. The estate contained a second landing at the south end of this swamp, apparently in or near the wooded 50 1/4 acres adjoining Henry Rozer's lands (see Map 2). The landing may have been at or near the mouth of the Susquehanna River (see Maps 1 and 2). Marbury's lease allowed him to build a ferry house, two ferry boats, and a grainery, and to make other improvements at the landing. He paid £350 annually for the lease. Although it was dated September 10, 1784, the lease was to begin on January 1, 1785. Marbury was apparently timbering his lands before 1785, however, since testimony by Henry Rozer in early 1785 indicated that Marbury had cut 300-400 cords of poplar, white oak, and other trees by this time (MHR, Chancery Papers 128, 1784-1785).

Specific uses of the dower land are not spelled out in the documents. The 1785 map suggests that the 89-acre unit around the manor house was used for gardens and orchards but not for crops: "the cleared hills, including the house, garden, orchards and land not arable." References to tobacco houses and to the need for an additional tobacco house suggest



that tobacco production may have been expanding. This assertion is supported by the fact that the tenants wished to clear additional fresh land for tobacco. References to wheat acreage and to possibly building a new grainery indicate some interest in wheat production. The "overseer and manager," Lancelot Wade, referred to the need for additional fencing to enclose crops and pasture. The documents do not inform us of the extent of livestock holdings at Oxon Hill Manor at this time, but the fencing of pasture indicates that the estate did not completely follow the common practice of allowing livestock to forage for food. Presumably, the estate also had to have adequate housing for Marbury's 17 slaves and, possibly, for his overseer by this time. The fact that Walter Dulany Addison gradually reduced his slaveholdings in the 1790s (see Report #3) suggests that the outbuildings listed in the 1798 Federal Tax Assessment (see Report #3) had been built before Walter moved into the manor house in 1793.

Leonard "Luke" Marbury was a medium slaveowner in 1776, owning 11 slaves. By 1785, at age 40, he owned 12 slaves but was able to rent 5 others. By 1793-94 he owned 28 slaves, although by this date he was no longer leasing the manor house at Oxon Hill (Prince George's County, Assessment Records, 1793-94). Nicholas Lowe owned 8 slaves in 1776, expanding this total to 18 by 1793-94. Marbury and Lowe owned £830 and £746 in personal property, respectively, in 1793-94, making both of them very well-to-do if not extremely wealthy men. Zachariah Berry, who would buy Oxon Hill Manor in 1810, owned 53 slaves and £1541 personal property at his estate in Collington Hundred in 1793-94. Thomas Hanson owned 15 slaves and £753 total personal property in Piscataway and Hynson Hundreds in 1793-94, although he may have held additional property elsewhere. The same can be said for the other property owners mentioned here (PGCo., Assessment Records, 1793-94).

As Report #3 indicates, Walter Dulany Addison moved into the Oxon Hill Manor house with his new wife in 1793. Parts of the original 3562 1/4 acres had already been sold by that date (more on this above), but the leasing situation on his lands is not clear. According to



testimony in the 1784-85 hearings, Walter's 2734 1/4 acres (3562 1/4 minus the 828-acre dower) included about 1200 acres of good wooded land. From 1793 until 1810, when he sold most of what then remained of Oxon Hill Manor, Walter leased parts of his remaining lands. These leases included: approximately 800 acres to Elsworth and John Bayne (non-dower land) in 1798; an unspecified acreage to John Davies (Davis) in 1801 (dower marshland along the Potomac); an unspecified acreage to Francis Kirby at an unspecified date (dower land at the mouth of the Susquehanna River-see the waterway drawn in the "ashen swamp" area on Maps 1 and 2); and an unspecified acreage to Joseph Thomas at both the North and South ends of the ashen swamp. Details on the Kirby and Thomas leases are not provided in the documents, but it appears that Thomas operated ferries at each of his sites. One ferry was at the landing mentioned in the Hansons' lease to Leonard Marbury and the other was at the old "Clifford's Ferry" site at the Oxen Creek end of the swamp across from Alexandria. A 1797 deed refers to this latter ferry as "Thomas' Ferry," although deeds from 1801 and 1806 use simply "The Ferry" to describe the leased area. Thomas appears to have rented the ferry site plus 20 adjoining acres (MHR, Land Records, JRM 6, p.86, October 27, 1797; JRM 8, p.520, July 7, 1801; JRM 11, p.374, January 4, 1806). Since specific boundaries cannot be located from the documentary descriptions, the exact location and acreages of these leases cannot be determined.

No other leases by Walter Dulany Addison are recorded in the land records for Prince George's County. As noted in Report #3, Addison's lease to John Davies had a developmental orientation, calling for reclaiming land from the Potomac within five years. Addison was apparently building upon the work that the Hansons had begun in the 1780s. Since he lived in the Oxon Hill Manor house from 1793 to 1804, the immediate site area was probably not leased. Since he owned only 7 slaves in 1800 (1800 Census) and only 10 in 1809 (PGCo., Assessment Records, 1809), he could not have been directly operating a very large-scale plantation (see Report #3). Whether or not the house was rented from the time he moved to Hart Park in 1804 until its sale in 1810 is not known.



### The Selling of Oxon Hill Manor

The process by which the original 3663 acres of Oxon Hill Manor were sold is only partially clear from the land, court, and tax assessment records. As mentioned previously, 100  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres were given to Walter Dulany Addison's uncle, John Addison, before 1782, reducing the 3663 acres to 3562  $\frac{1}{4}$ . In 1790, Walter sold 65  $\frac{7}{8}$  acres to Peter Savary (Savaree) for £308. This tract was taken from the original "Locust Thicket" grant to the south of the manor house. Savary had already purchased the "Lodge," a house and lands owned originally by John Addison and purchased by the Reverend Jonathan Boucher in 1773 (see Report #3). A Loyalist, Boucher had his estate confiscated and sold to a Dr. William Baker, from whom Savary bought the property.

Sometime in the early 1790s Walter Dulany Addison gave about 400 acres of his 618-acre Hart Park tract to his mother, Rebecca Hanson (see Report #3). She and her husband sold the tract in 1797 to Nathaniel Washington (MHR, Land Records, JRM 6, p.80, October 3, 1797), but Washington sold the property back to Walter Addison in 1803 (MHR, Land Records, JRM 10, p.16 and p.145, Jan. 18, 1803 and March 12, 1803). Addison moved to the Hart Park property when he abandoned the Oxon Hill Manor house in 1804.

In 1797 Walter Addison also sold two other parts of Oxon Hill Manor. He sold 500 acres of the Locust Thicket and Discontent tracts (see Map 1) to his brother, Henry Addison, and a total of 269  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres (parts of Oxon Hill Manor and Force) to Nicholas Lingan. The acreage taken from Oxon Hill and sold to Lingan can be approximated by noting that Force had an area of only 54 acres. Addison must have sold at least 215  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres (269  $\frac{3}{4}$  minus 54 acres) of the Oxon Hill acreage to Lingan, although the actual figure was a little larger because he sold only part of Force. By 1797, then, Walter had sold about 1200 acres of the 2734  $\frac{1}{4}$  non-dower lands, leaving him with approximately 1534 acres. He was in control of the dower, however, as indicated by his leasing arrangements and his living at the manor house. The documents give no indication of any formal arrangement with his mother, and he did not obtain legal control of the dower until he purchased it in 1807.



In 1803 he recovered the approximately 400 acres of Hart Park, but in 1805 sold 15 acres of Oxon Hill to Francis Edward Hall Rozer (MHR, JRM 11, p.238, December 5, 1805). In 1807 he purchased the 828-acre dower (MHR, JRM 12, p.205, March 12, 1807). He now owned about 2750 acres of the original 3663 acres. The 500 acres sold to his brother, Henry, in 1797 was sold after Henry's death to William Marbury in 1808 (MHR, JRM 12, p.462, January 25, 1808).

The recorded deeds, however, do not tell the entire story regarding the selling off of Oxon Hill Manor over the years. The foregoing statement that Addison still owned 2750 acres in 1807, in fact, is probably inaccurate. The Prince George's County tax assessment for 1810 indicates that with the sale of the manor house and the 1328 acres to Zachariah Berry in 1810, Walter Dulany Addison was left with only 786 1/4 acres of Oxon Hill Manor. The deeds show the sale of only one major tract--the 500 acres sold to Henry Addison in 1797 and then to Captain William Marbury in 1808. The tax assessment reveals the true picture as of 1810:

Owner	Acreage of the Original Oxon Hill Manor
Walter Dulany Addison	786 1/4
Zachariah Berry	1328
John Bayne	215
Charles Beall	75
Dr. Samuel DeButts	40
Francis Kirbey	532
Daniel Moseley	10
Capt. William Marbury	500
Samuel Ridout	81
Joseph Thomas	12 1/4
Total	3579 1/2

The 3579 1/2 acres coincides roughly with the 3562 1/4 acres of Oxon Hill Manor known to be in Addison's possession in 1783 when the dower was awarded to his mother. The 215 acres owned by John Bayne may be most of the acreage purchased by Nicholas Lingam (and resold to Bayne?)



in 1797. It is not known exactly what lands Zachariah Berry purchased in 1810, although additional deed research will clarify this. At this time I have no explanation for the lack of agreement between the recorded deed records and the 1810 tax assessment. The tax assessment data, however, supports even more strongly the assertion made in Report #3 that Walter Dulany Addison gradually disposed of his lands and that he was not an active or successful planter. The contrast with his father's approach to Oxon Hill is striking.

By 1810 Walter Addison was living in Georgetown and Zachariah Berry in his home plantation at "Concord" in Collington Hundred. Addison sold another 1/2 acre of Oxon Hill to Henry Bryan in 1815 (MHR, JRM 16, p.670, May 13, 1815) and an additional 326 acres to Elsworth Bayne in 1817 (MHR, JRM 17, p.145, January 1, 1817). Zachariah Berry's activities at Oxon Hill Manor remain uncertain. The 1810 tax assessment does not list Zachariah Berry as owning any personal property at Oxon Hill (slaves, plate, etc.), but lists his 1328 acres of land valued at £5076. Berry was an extremely wealthy individual. His £2519 personal property, including 57 slaves, and his £5724 real property at his home in Collington Hundred made him the wealthiest individual in both categories in all of Collington and Western Branch Hundreds. His 57 slaves was exactly five times the average 11.4 slaves for all assessed property holders, and his £5724 in real property was almost six times the average £993 for the two Hundreds. His £5076 real property (Oxon Hill) in Piscataway and Hynson Hundreds was almost twelve times the average £454 real property for those two Hundreds (PGCo., Assessment Records, Real and Personal Property, 1810).

My recent research did not yield much information of value to our understanding of land use and occupancy patterns at the Oxon Hill Manor site during the Berry years. A search of Nineteenth Century land records revealed no recorded leases by either Zachariah or Thomas E. Berry before the leases referred to in the 1870s and 1880s insanity proceedings (see Reports #2 and #3). In fact, almost no leases by any Prince George's County landowners were recorded in the county deeds.



Tax assessment data from 1827 shows that Zachariah Berry resided in Collington Hundred, owning 55 slaves and \$5131 personal property (\$3442 in slaves). The 1844 tax assessment lists Zachariah in Collington Hundred, but also lists a Thomas Berry at Oxon Hill. This record shows that a Thomas Berry "owned" 1308 acres at Oxon Hill, separated into 865 acres valued at \$40 per acre and 443 acres valued at \$12 per acre--a total value of \$39,916. This same Thomas Berry owned property at Silver Hill and Spring Valley in the same 6th District (Spaldings), valued at only \$827. His real estate in Spaldings, then, was worth a total of \$40,743. Although it is not certain that this Thomas Berry is Thomas E. Berry, Zachariah Berry's son and heir to Oxon Hill at Zachariah's death in 1845, it seems probable. The issue is confused by the fact that a Thomas Berry, age 69 in 1850, also owned land in Prince George's County. Yet another Thomas Berry, the grandson of Zachariah Berry and son of Zachariah Berry Jr., was also living in Prince George's County. Since this Thomas Berry married in 1866, however, it seems probable that he was a minor in 1844 (PGCo., Assessment Records, 1827, 1844).

Although the apparent tendency to interchange Thomas and Thomas E. Berry in the Nineteenth Century documentation creates confusion and uncertainty, the fact that a Thomas Berry was associated with Zachariah Berry's Oxon Hill property before his death in 1845 strongly suggests that a family member either occupied or directly managed the Oxon Hill estate in Zachariah's absence. If this is true, the property may not have been leased throughout the entire 1810-1845 period. The implications of a Thomas Berry occupancy of Oxon Hill Manor before 1845, however, are not altogether clear. It does establish the probability that the estate would have had a more prosperous appearance under Berry than under a tenant, although this cannot be assumed as a certainty. Additional research into tax assessment records, combined with census and other records, may help to resolve this difficulty.

#### A Note on Future Research

My research plans for the next few weeks include examination of tax data, census records, court proceedings, commercial papers, a



Master's Thesis on Prince George's County from 1840 to 1860, land records, and a variety of secondary sources. This research will be conducted at the Library of Congress, Upper Marlboro (PG County Records), the University of Maryland, the Maryland Hall of Records in Annapolis, the Maryland State Law Library in Annapolis, and other repositories as needed. My research will emphasize land use and occupancy patterns at the Oxon Hill Manor house site in the Nineteenth Century, in an effort to resolve some of the unanswered questions regarding the Berry ownership from 1810 to 1888.